



O*NET OnLine

Summary Report for: 29-2052.00 - Pharmacy Technicians

Updated 2010

Bright Outlook

Prepare medications under the direction of a pharmacist. May measure, mix, count out, label, and record amounts and dosages of medications.

Sample of reported job titles: Pharmacy Technician, Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT), IV Certified Pharmacy Technician, Pharmaceutical Care Associate

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Tasks

- Receive written prescription or refill requests and verify that information is complete and accurate.
- Establish and maintain patient profiles, including lists of medications taken by individual patients.
- Maintain proper storage and security conditions for drugs.
- Answer telephones, responding to questions or requests.
- Prepack bulk medicines, fill bottles with prescribed medications, and type and affix labels.
- Mix pharmaceutical preparations according to written prescriptions.
- Clean, and help maintain, equipment and work areas, and sterilize glassware according to prescribed methods.
- Price and file prescriptions that have been filled.
- Assist customers by answering simple questions, locating items or referring them to the pharmacist for medication information.
- Receive and store incoming supplies, verify quantities against invoices, check for outdated medications in current inventory, and inform supervisors of stock needs and shortages.

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Tools & Technology

Tools used in this occupation:

Filling or sealing auger dose machines — Automatic unit dose strip packaging machines; Tube filling and crimping machines

Laboratory balances — Equal-arm balances; Single-beam balances; Torsion balances; Unequal-arm

balances

Laboratory blenders or emulsifiers — Blending/agitating machines; Total Parenteral Nutrition TPN compounders

Laboratory mills — Benchtop colloid mills; Colloid mills; Grinding and shearing colloid mills

Sterile or aseptic processing or filling machines — Automatic bottle filling machines; Computer-based dispensing equipment; Semiautomatic sterile solution transferring devices

Technology used in this occupation:

Accounting software — Billing and reimbursement software

Data base user interface and query software — Database software; Drug compatibility software

Inventory management software — Cardinal Health Pyxis CII Safe

Label making software — Label-making software

Medical software — Compounder software; Patient record maintenance software; Pharmaceutical software; Prescription processing software

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Knowledge

Customer and Personal Service — Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Mathematics — Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.

English Language — Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

Computers and Electronics — Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.

Clerical — Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.

Medicine and Dentistry — Knowledge of the information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.

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Skills

Active Listening — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

Reading Comprehension — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

Speaking — Talking to others to convey information effectively.

Critical Thinking — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

Service Orientation — Actively looking for ways to help people.

Social Perceptiveness — Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Mathematics — Using mathematics to solve problems.

Coordination — Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.

Judgment and Decision Making — Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.

Monitoring — Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.

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Abilities

Near Vision — The ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).

Oral Comprehension — The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.

Written Comprehension — The ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.

Oral Expression — The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.

Problem Sensitivity — The ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.

Speech Recognition — The ability to identify and understand the speech of another person.

Category Flexibility — The ability to generate or use different sets of rules for combining or grouping things in different ways.

Information Ordering — The ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).

Deductive Reasoning — The ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.

Speech Clarity — The ability to speak clearly so others can understand you.

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Work Activities

Processing Information — Compiling, coding, categorizing, calculating, tabulating, auditing, or verifying information or data.

Getting Information — Observing, receiving, and otherwise obtaining information from all relevant sources.

Interacting With Computers — Using computers and computer systems (including hardware and software) to program, write software, set up functions, enter data, or process information.

Evaluating Information to Determine Compliance with Standards — Using relevant information and individual judgment to determine whether events or processes comply with laws, regulations, or standards.

Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events — Identifying information by categorizing, estimating, recognizing differences or similarities, and detecting changes in circumstances or events.

Updating and Using Relevant Knowledge — Keeping up-to-date technically and applying new knowledge to your job.

Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates — Providing information to supervisors, co-workers, and subordinates by telephone, in written form, e-mail, or in person.

Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work — Developing specific goals and plans to prioritize, organize, and accomplish your work.

Making Decisions and Solving Problems — Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems.

Assisting and Caring for Others — Providing personal assistance, medical attention, emotional support, or other personal care to others such as coworkers, customers, or patients.

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Work Context

Telephone — How often do you have telephone conversations in this job?

Contact With Others — How much does this job require the worker to be in contact with others (face-to-face, by telephone, or otherwise) in order to perform it?

Importance of Being Exact or Accurate — How important is being very exact or highly accurate in performing this job?

Indoors, Environmentally Controlled — How often does this job require working indoors in environmentally controlled conditions?

Spend Time Standing — How much does this job require standing?

Work With Work Group or Team — How important is it to work with others in a group or team in this job?

Deal With External Customers — How important is it to work with external customers or the public in this job?

Physical Proximity — To what extent does this job require the worker to perform job tasks in close physical proximity to other people?

Frequency of Decision Making — How frequently is the worker required to make decisions that affect other people, the financial resources, and/or the image and reputation of the organization?

Face-to-Face Discussions — How often do you have to have face-to-face discussions with individuals or teams in this job?

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Job Zone

Title Job Zone Three: Medium Preparation Needed

Education Most occupations in this zone require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree.

Related Experience Previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is required for these occupations. For example, an electrician must have completed three or four years of apprenticeship or several years of vocational training, and often must have passed a licensing exam, in order to perform the job.

Job Training Employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations.

Job Zone Examples These occupations usually involve using communication and organizational skills to coordinate, supervise, manage, or train others to accomplish goals. Examples include

food service managers, electricians, agricultural technicians, legal secretaries, interviewers, and insurance sales agents.

SVP Range (6.0 to < 7.0)

There are 5 recognized apprenticeable specialties associated with this occupation:




Pharmacist Assistant; Pharmacy Support Staff (Level I Pharmacy Service Associate); Pharmacy Support Staff (Level II Pharmacy Support Technician); Pharmacy Support Staff (Level III Lead Pharmacy Technician); Pharmacy Support Staff

To learn about specific apprenticeship opportunities, please consult the U.S. Department of Labor [State Apprenticeship Information](#) website.

For general information about apprenticeships, training, and partnerships with business, visit the U.S. Department of Labor [Office of Apprenticeship](#) website.

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Education

Percentage of Respondents	Education Level Required
77 	Some college, no degree
16 	High school diploma or equivalent
3 	Less than high school diploma

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Interests

Interest code: **CR**

Conventional — Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

Realistic — Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

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Work Styles

Attention to Detail — Job requires being careful about detail and thorough in completing work tasks.

Integrity — Job requires being honest and ethical.

Concern for Others — Job requires being sensitive to others' needs and feelings and being understanding and helpful on the job.

Cooperation — Job requires being pleasant with others on the job and displaying a good-natured, cooperative attitude.

Dependability — Job requires being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligations.

Self Control — Job requires maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior, even in very difficult situations.

Stress Tolerance — Job requires accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high stress situations.

Adaptability/Flexibility — Job requires being open to change (positive or negative) and to considerable variety in the workplace.

Social Orientation — Job requires preferring to work with others rather than alone, and being personally connected with others on the job.

Initiative — Job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges.

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Work Values





Relationships — Occupations that satisfy this work value allow employees to provide service to others and work with co-workers in a friendly non-competitive environment. Corresponding needs are Co-workers, Moral Values and Social Service.

Support — Occupations that satisfy this work value offer supportive management that stands behind employees. Corresponding needs are Company Policies, Supervision: Human Relations and Supervision: Technical.

Achievement — Occupations that satisfy this work value are results oriented and allow employees to use their strongest abilities, giving them a feeling of accomplishment. Corresponding needs are Ability Utilization and Achievement.

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Related Occupations

- 29-2031.00 [Cardiovascular Technologists and](#) 
- 29-2071.00 [Medical Records and Health Information Technicians](#) 
- 29-2081.00 [Opticians, Dispensing](#)
- 31-9091.00 [Dental Assistants](#) 
- 43-6013.00 [Medical Secretaries](#) 
- 45-2021.00 [Animal Breeders](#)

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Wages & Employment Trends

National

Median wages (2009) \$13.49 hourly, \$28,070 annual

Employment (2008) 326,000 employees

Projected growth (2008-2018) ***** Much faster than average (20% or higher)

Projected job openings (2008-2018) 182,000

Top Industries (2008) Retail Trade
Health Care and Social Assistance

State & National

Select a State

Go



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics [2009 wage data](#) and [2008-2018 employment projections](#). "Projected growth" represents the estimated change in total employment over the projections period (2008-2018). "Projected job openings" represent openings due to growth and replacement.

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Disclaimer: Sources are listed to provide additional information on related jobs, specialties, and/or industries. Links to non-DOL Internet sites are provided for your convenience and do not constitute an endorsement.

- [Pharmacy technicians and aides](#). Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition*.
- [American Society of Health-System Pharmacists \(ASHP\)](#), 7272 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814. Phone: (301) 657-3000.
- [Pharmacy Technician Certification Board \(PTCB\)](#), 2215 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20037. Phone: (800) 363-8012.

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